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1915
CANADIAN NATIONAL
EXHIBITION
TORONTO
AUG 28 1915
CENSOR
Mrs E. Scott Raff
Roslyn Apartments
Cor Howard & Glen Rd.
Toronto
Canada
131

Somewhere in France

Mar. 27/15

My darling Emmie - Well we have arrived at our destination and to-day were within sound of the guns, which, while I was dressing were shelling an aeroplane. To-day all our fellows came in from the trenches for a week's rest - much against their inclinations and I saw a lot of them, Wodehouse, Chisholm and a lot more. They are looking very fit and there is very little sickness among them. The officers are delighted and say that there is no better Division over here - They took to the trenches like ducks to water and made them more habitable than when they got them by flooring them with brush etc. and also improving them in other ways. They have not had any really serious fighting yet and most of our casualties are due to snipers. We arrived here yesterday from Abbeville - 113 miles and are taking our meals with a clearing casualty

station outfit - very nice fellows indeed. In the afternoon I had a visit from the DMS of the Army corps & he will give us half of the bacteriological work in the area, which includes our own Division. We have secured a splendid big room in the Hotel de Ville for our laboratory, which we expect to-morrow for Boulogne. We have only had two cases of typhoid fever since the Division came over but they are anxious about the spring and rightly so. The prognosis is bad for the fighting area is filthy. The towns which men have been billeted in all winter are very unsanitary though they have done wonders in keeping them as clean as they are. The peasants are putting in their crops as usual right up to the trenches and one would not dream that anything unusual was going on until you see the little towns with Soldiers everywhere present - and tremendous number of motor lorries, ambulances and other transport. It is intensely interesting of course and my only regret is that an order has been issued 133
compelling everybody to send their cameras home

It is an awful shame for there is much of intense interest from the photographic standpoint. I am living over a chocolate shop kept by a woman and three daughters, only one of which I have seen so far. It is a nice clean room and is evidently the guest chamber. Over the bed is a cross and on the mantle are elaborately carved figure of Christ on the cross. I am writing by candle light and hereafter all my baths will be of the sponge variety. The stairway up to the room is a steep corkscrew variety and difficult to negotiate. It is rather cold for there was ice in the ditches this morning. Even the Englishmen feel the cold so that it is evidently quite cold. I have never tried to speak French but find that what I learned at the Collegiate in the way of construction & pronunciation is coming back & I think I will be able to speak it fairly well in a few months. My ear is standing me in good stead in listening to others speaking it. I think Dear I am going to be far better satisfied here than in England. The English officers we met

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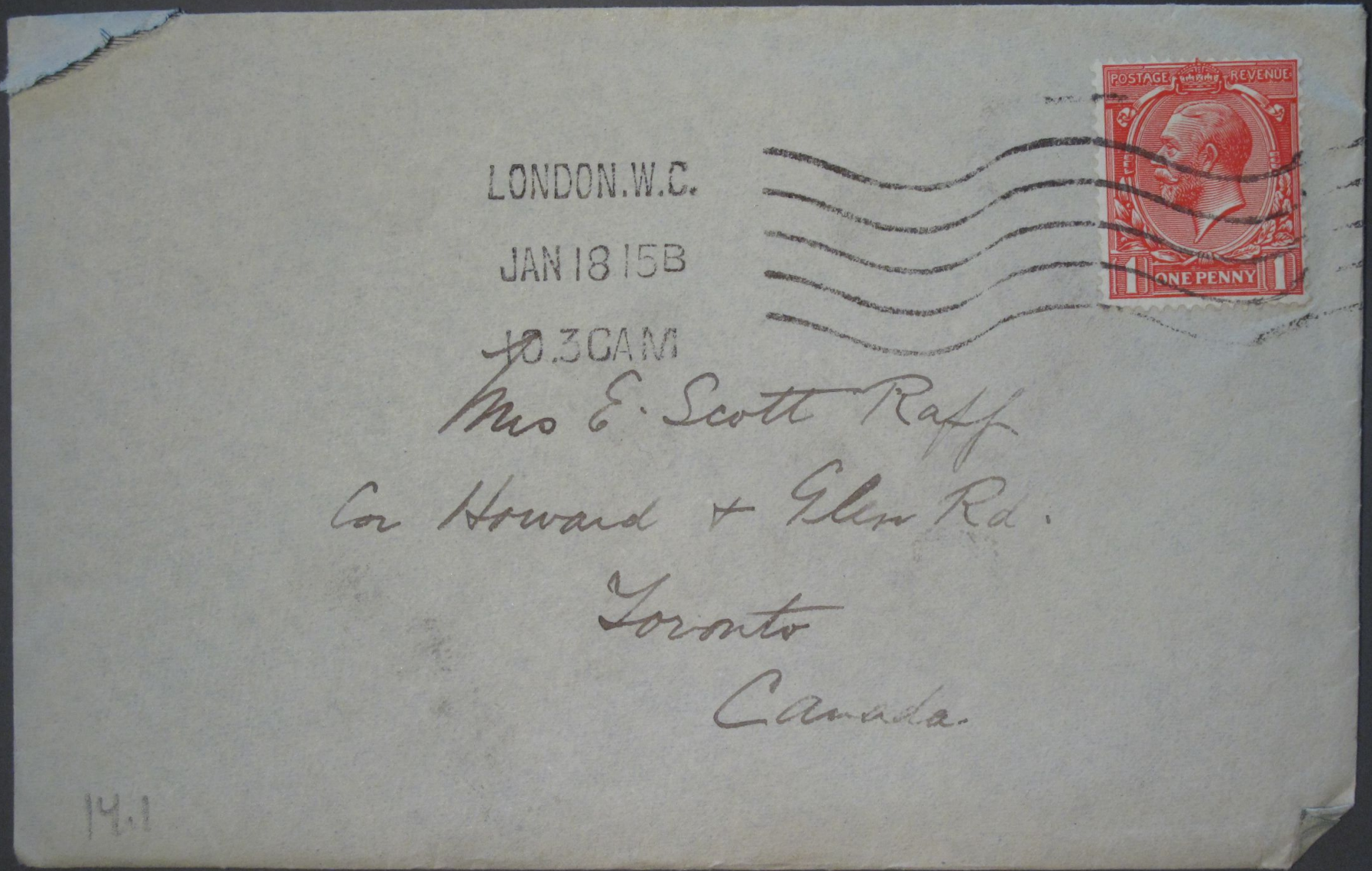
on the way up were all very fine chaps & apparently could not do enough for us. By working hard I am going to try and make the time pass until it is all over. French, writing, laboratory work & study will while away the time until the day comes for our return - I had awful luck with my mail. About fifty letters were sent back to England a couple of days ago so I have missed it again - To-day however I received from Dr Adams, Mr Kimmich, & Mrs Barden. Dr Adams was a dandy - 16 pages of very interesting stuff to me - & of course the others were equally interesting, though shorter. This is an experience, Sweetheart, but what is it compared to what I am losing at home - Nothing can compensate for that - When I think of the summer - and you alone and the months of time gone it makes me sick. I always did value every one of my visits to you and often told you how I felt that each one was as if it might not be another. All the time I love you Dearest better than anything in the world & better than all other things put together. It is the one great experience of life, Love, & we have it - Always your own George

B.5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14.1

GERRARD 4343.

SAVOY HOTEL,
LONDON.

Sunday
Jan. 17/15

My Darling Girl - Again I am back in the Savoy for two days stay and as usual it has turned into a business trip My work just now consists in trying to get all of our uninoculated soldiers finished before we move, which, unless something supervenes will be the first week in February. The time is apparently fixed. We have five bacteriologists working at Bulford laboratory trying to find Cerebro Spinal meningitis carriers with no luck so far. Now we are taking a sample battalion of 1000 men and are working them through: if as may be expected there are no 'carriers' there will be no objection to our moving forward particularly as the British

14.2

force at the front now have several cases.
I will be glad when we move for there is absolutely no satisfaction in it here in England and we can hardly get into more uncomfortable conditions. My fur lined burberry rain coat is fine and with a slight alteration will be ready Wednesday. I am getting special water tight boots made which come about two inches higher up the leg than the ordinary ones: I had my measure taken with the socks you knitted for me on so that they will be big enough. So there. I can wear them allright then and they are really very comfortable & warm.
The church bells are ringing outside now 'Lead kindly light amid the encircling gloom'. Yesterday afternoon I heard the London philharmonic chorus, of over 500 with orchestra and conducted by Sir H. Bridge give the 'Messiah' in Albert Hall. The place was crowded and I had a seat in the centre box of the lower row — a perfect place to see and hear. Clara Butt, Ruth Vincent, Ben Davies and Herbert Brown were the soloists and were all very fine. The rendering of 14.3

I know that my 'Redeemer liveth' was very beautiful, perhaps the best of all. I expected to get down to the Cathedral to-day to see my corner with 'The cloud capped towers' et bat- did not manage it. These days I am living in a sort of half light. Nothing looks very bright or nothing very dark. I feel as though I am quite ready for anything that comes and will accept it uncomplainingly. For awhile I rebelled but that is all over now and I can look forward with quietness and firmness to anything and everything. After all why should we worry: we cannot change things: everything will go on as far as we two are concerned just as if we made a great fight: Duty is a thing neither of us can fight against in ourselves and in that respect we are fatalists. Yesterday the air 'He was despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief' sung by Clara Butt sent a sort of thrill through me and somehow there came to me a new sense of

14.4

sympathy for the man of sorrows that I don't believe I've ever quite felt before. By the time this reaches you, Sweetheart, we will be about to move. You have already faced the whole thing and suffered I know very greatly. I, however, though I did not realize it, have been somehow counting on seeing you before we left - I don't know why, - only somehow I hadn't faced not seeing you. Now I have and that fact has somehow, since I have faced it, left me very quiet and strangely settled and content. I suppose that I will be back and forward but if you don't one I will stay right in the field and have this end for the next experts who are coming. I would far rather be there than here anyway. The question of glory & fame is absolutely non existent! I feel just as one of the million who are doing their little because it is the only thing to do and because it is in the cause of the right. I feel so sorry for you away back there where you cannot know how we are getting along and worrying because

C

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GERRARD 4343.

SAVOY HOTEL,
LONDON.

You do not hear regularly. It will be far worse for you than me. Just as often as I can I will send you word even if it be only a card. My letters may be censored but they wont worry about the material that I usually write. If you ever want to know anything specially in case letters dont come or you are worried you could cable the Canadian Headquarters 36 Victoria St London or the A.D.M.S. at the same place - but you wont need to for I think the mail will come through allright, for it comes to England regularly. A story is going around here about a lady, who asked K. Kitchener how long the war would last. 'Madam, he said,' I do not know how long the war will last, but I think it will begin about May'. I think that is about it. To-day I spent at the Listen Institute,

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where I had dinner with Dr Martin, the Director, who lives in a beautiful flat up on the top, and a Major (Dr) from India. The latter said that about 125,000 native troops had been moved out of India and 70,000 British, the latter of course to France. The regular frontier places had been taken by British territorials and the native troops had been moved out so that nothing could happen while Britain was busy elsewhere. Truly Britain is a far sighted nation. I just quote this to show that it is expected that in spring there will be a tremendously increased conflict and it will be defensive on the part of Germany. The loss of life will be tremendous. On our side for that is the only way to attack, mined and trenched as it will be, can be won. Of course we will be well back from the firing line but close enough to make it interesting. No move has been made yet to get our mobile laboratory; if we don't get it of course I will have less to do but I

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would like to have it and keep good and busy to pass the time quickly. Of course the diary wont be of great interest to you, Dearest, because you cant read between the lines. But it will be of intense interest to me some day in recalling events. It is only a sketch written without much comment. Preserve it though as my most precious bit of property: I wish I could write short hand and then could make it fuller. I will send the next one back before I leave England & you can keep it too. If you dont want to be bothered give them to Charlie & he will put them in the safe, for I do really value them as my daily chronicle of to me my war life history. Mary's beau will be going back on the 20th but I could not bring myself to see him again or ask him to take any messages. He doesnt interest me at all: The only message I would like to give him is that I dont think much of Mary; and to tell her so she has betrayed the trust I placed in her absolutely and hasnt played the game as she led me to believe she would

14.8

Well, Darling Girl, we have lived and loved and nobody can take that from us. I love to think of you going on and getting our little nest ready for it certainly makes me happy to think of you doing that and it will keep you interested in something for our future life and happiness. I cant do anything of that sort & you will have to do and think for me. I am sitting here in a gorgously furnished room with elaborately inlaid mahogany furniture, worth, I suppose £200. There are two single mahogany beds side by side with the nicest strawberry coloured spread with appliqué work on them and double reading lamps, clothes cupboards etc. I feel quite like an interloper in this room, intended for two. It isnt the picture of any room in the home that I have conceived of, that mysterious house of my dreams. I dont see this furniture at all; I dont see anything about it except you, my Dream Girl, seated by the fireside, or in a flood of golden sunlight by a long band of windows. I wonder if it is all just a dream or if it will ever come true? That is where I always come back. Will it ever come true? With a heart swelling with love for you, my Darling, the sweetest and finest woman in the world

George

Mrs E. Scott Raff

Roslyn Apartments

cr Howard & Glen Rd.

Toronto

Canada.

Bulford Cottage
Hospital
Wilts

Mar. 14/15

My Dream Girl-come-true - Yesterday we got quite a shock here. I was called to the telephone and was asked by Colonel Lloyd of Bulford Camp if our laboratory apparatus was ready to go. Of course it was and I told him that he would send a fatigue party ready to load it on the trucks as soon as they arrived. It caused quite a flutter in our little section which was beginning to think that the whole thing was a myth. It was quite amusing to see any of the men going around after the stuff had gone, with broad smiles upon their faces. From the viewpoint of tactics I suppose it is an indication that we also will move sooner or later.

Yesterday we received news of the death of one of my new military friends - Major Hyndbottam of the Queen's Own - He was always around Dr Haywood's tent when I was over there and was a very fine fellow. He was not killed but evidently must have died of some illness. I suppose it will be that way right along now. They will go one after another. As I told you our fellows are already giving a good account of themselves and I haven't the slightest doubt but that they will continue to do so.

Yesterday afternoon Capt Tribe, Rankin, Sloko and I drove over to Winchester, which is only thirty one miles from here. It was a glorious spring day - and we enjoyed the drive greatly. The choir in the Cathedral was nearly over but we had enough to know that it was a very beautiful choir and a very beautiful organ. The cathedral inside is wonderful with its low vaulted roof, walls of stained glass and numerous memorials. It stills in the close 15.7 roamed by the monks of the 11th Century even beautiful to look at

could not get in unfortunately as the Verger insisted on closing up. As I walked down the aisle with him I noticed a mural tablet on the wall to 'Jane Austen' - 'What!' I said, 'was she buried here?!' 'Look under your feet', he said, and looking down I found that I was standing on her grave. He also pointed out a little gallery where the actors played the 'miracle' plays when the profession was under the control of the Church. Also a large window made up of small bits of coloured glass, was pointed out, the bits being all that was left of the original stained glass when Cromwell's Army got through with the cathedral. Winchester is a very interesting old town and must be well worth a visit at any time. It is wonderful, with these roads, how one can shoot around this country seeing things. It just took us one hour to come home. The car has become quite interesting to me on account of its standing tests of both endurance and speed. On the way up to London we averaged the whole distance at less than 1½ minutes to the mile

This morning I had a note from Bill Allen in answer to my note. He is in Nottingham and among other things in his telegram says 'Everybody well, Mrs Raff very fit' + also 'Where can we spend next Saturday or Sunday'. If I am here we certainly will get together and I will be greatly tickled to see him. Wouldn't it be great if he were you? Charlie, in a letter which came in the same mail as yours says 'Bill is all puffed up about his family'. He had one of the best and pleasantest voyages he has ever had this time.

If we are here much longer I will see an Easter spring after all. It is just dusk now and the air is simply full of bird songs. All day long the larks sing deliriously and other unknown songsters make melody most of the time. The hedges are beginning to thicken up with the bursting buds, the grass is growing greener day by day and there is, particularly during the past two days, a decided springish feeling in the air. If it were only possible for me to be over there with you in this spring time and go with you on your little voyages of exploration and buying - wouldn't we be the happy kids?

It is certainly cheering to hear you speak of 'our home' +

15.3

of buying things. Tell me all about it as you go along. I will be with you in spirit and you will know when I like things. You will probably call it 'intuition' but it will not be that. It will be me - George. Of course we will do what Mrs Eaton wants as long as she doesn't dictate as to what we are to do with our lives. They belong to us to do as we alone decide. It will come out alright, Darling, I am sure of that; as long as you decide what is to be done. It is only when you occasionally grow a little vague and speak of the future indefinitely that I grow anxious. For I believe that when our two wills decide on a course of action nobody will be able to withstand us. 'Ain't I got confidence in us?' By this time I suppose you will have your first Art treasure at home and I hope it will be indeed a real comfort to you in your great loneliness. I am sending you a draft for £50 this time: there isn't much there, but just now, extra equipment taking quite a bit; but there will be more soon. After this there can't be much chance to spend even if I wanted it. Perhaps, some day, we will have more money but I guess we don't need an awful lot. Only want enough to make you comfortable and happy. The writing instinct is growing stronger within me and I find myself very often, pen in hand, trying to depict some of the things I see about me. In that way I am not losing time for there is certainly lots of material of interest to write about. I will have to learn to run a typewriter though. My difficulty is that my pen will not go fast enough and I get tired writing by hand - it is too slow. Then I hate re-reading, which of course is essential to good simple work. So you see, this longing is not, as may not prove to be altogether lost time as I often feel it is. No I won't take one life if I can help it and I will do my best to save all I can.

Since your letter the other day by which I know you are well and are going on with something definite that, to quote your own words, sends thrills up and down your spine, I have been simply dancing again. Your happiness is my happiness. It was a very great regret that I could not be with you in your hour of need as I wanted to be above all else. I too felt, not because she was your mother altogether but because she was the sweetest and dearest old lady I have ever known. I felt she was my mother too. Some day this will all be over and it will take some superhuman power to ever tear me from your side again. I love you, Emmie, I love you very dearly. You are the most beautiful spirit I know and you are my ideal and my best friend. I'll see many times you take my

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Feb 22
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Mrs E. Scott Raff
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16A

Feb. 28th/15

Bulford Cottage

My Darling. We are all here waiting for the news to move to France. Everything is in readiness but there was some mix-up about the motor lorry and we have had to wait in consequence, though the matter was straightened out last Thursday. Mistakes are not rectified in a day at the War Office. It was just as well as a matter of fact because there were some details in regard to the medo. pay which had to be made straight and that has taken a couple of days. In fact we just had things finally adjusted to-day — Sunday. Our little unit is the envy of the other medical men of # 1 Canad. Hospital who think we are the luckiest dogs alive. As Dr Haywood says

we have drawn the only plum in the whole business. Just think, he said, of going to war in your own motor car, doing your own life work, with men you like & have picked yourself & with a unit, which is practically a free lance. I've never seen the beat of it.

So you see others think I am lucky. But nobody knows how lucky I am except myself for I have - you - at least almost for I have your love and your promise and all the rest that makes a man very very happy - I have thought of you and your sorrow & your loneliness so much since I received your cable - Poor kid - If I had only been there to help you and comfort you. I was hoping you would not have that dreadful sense of loss, because the other feeling is such a tremendously satisfying thing. Of course it did not come right away and I firmly believe that it will come to you - That is why Pelle Grimm interested me so much. Every day for instance I have offers of drinks. Invariably Kathie's feeling about such things comes to me, just as yours does about other things. I knew you would wear

16.3

and Dorothy loves silk stockings. Many thanks for her gift and for mine. The good news came yesterday that Mr Allan arrived safely after a good passage even if all lights were out in the Irish Sea. I went to Brantford to read on Thursday Mrs Burden went with me and we were the guests of Mrs Lloyd Harris. They have a very beautiful home. a sun room with growing vines all over one wall. A conservatory filled with blossoms. I felt like saying we have a bigger one than this. Every Saturday it has been raining snowing and blowing a storm and every Saturday I plan to go. Eva says she has had the same experience. I take it to be up there without your trip I must. Ask over there and so when the days are gone. I have had neuralgia this week and have not felt like using my eyes to write. Joe has been ill and so has Katie but they are better. Dorothy is fine and is watching for Ben. He is in town on the way home from Galt where they took the championship of the Northern Hockey League by one point. You will have seen the verdicts and will see Mr Allan and they will both give you news of me from "face to face" I like that. It was good to hear Dr Scott speak of seeing you and of how well you looked. It was good to read what Mrs Stewart said of you and it was good to get your letter written from her home. Thanks for the bouquet. You always give me my first spring flowers. Other years they have been violets from the Lake. You shall have your own home and it shall be a different home to the Stewarts. I feel they were strong but not on a spiritual basis I somehow feel our life will be different to theirs. 63

have seen it - think it wonderful. It is paid for and will be one of our greatest treasures. Tomorrow is Mrs Eaton's birthday. She and Mrs Barnside have gone to Atlantic City for two or three weeks. Mrs Burdeen and Gretta go down for a week while they are there. Gretta is a very sad little soul these days. I said to Maggie on the way to Bradford "I feel sorry for Gretta." "Well you may" she said - "Godson is not the man remembering her sometimes and sometimes forgetting - for that dear loving child. We had such a nice visit with Jo and Jean Bradford Maggie and I. They are genuine friends of ours and looking forward with the greatest anticipation to the time when we have a home of our own.

6.5

I was just thinking today of all the things we have played like children together. This is the first spring without my beau to play with - Instead I will play that I am the big robin getting the nest ready. I have always wanted some one to take care of me and do things for me but even now the line of fatality shows up again. When I think of me life together I am always doing things for you. I wonder if it will be this to the end of time. Will the time ever be there to take care of me? This telling was interrupted by callers.

Ben came just then Roy Carrie and his sister and Mrs Parker and Ruth Dorothy gave us afternoon tea and they have all gone and I am finishing my telling to my Lover before getting ready for church. Mary and I are going up to see Mrs Thompson who fell and hurt her hip then on to the First Methodist Church. Our Love will surely keep us safe and good and if it has not proved to us that it is not by enough to marry on. My Love enveloped me like a veil and all my thoughts and actions

are what is becoming to the wife of an absent Soldier. Dorothy said: "Mother you are very beautiful woman but you always seems to be in a cloister with some people that is true I am in a Cloister with you. I have found my Love and the rest of my life will be concerned to him or to no one else. I love you. You dear and there is only you in the world for me. Write me your thoughts and tell me when you are depressed and when you are happy. Be a good boy I know you are and think you with all my heart and Soul Emma

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